

Clerk, U.S. District Court
Southern District of Texas
FILED

A091 (Rev. 8/01) Criminal Complaint

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS**

MAR 18 2015

David J. Bradley, Clerk of Court

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

V.

John Wesley LAWSON

CRIMINAL COMPLAINT

Case Number: **C-15-315M**

I, the undersigned complainant state that the following is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief. On or about 3/16/2015 in Brooks County, in the
(Date)

Southern District of Texas defendant, **John Wesley LAWSON**

did knowingly or in a reckless disregard of the fact that an alien had come to, entered, or remained in the United States in violation of law, transport, or move or attempt to transport or move such alien within the United States by means of transportation or otherwise, in furtherance of such violation of law,

in violation of Title 8 United States Code, Section(s) 1324.
I further state that I am a(n) Special Agent and that this complaint is based on the
following facts: Official Title

See Attached Affidavit of Special Agent

David L. Muir

Continued on the attached sheet and made a part of this complaint:

☒ Yes ☐ No

Signature of Complainant

David L. Muir

Printed Name of Complainant

Sworn to before me and signed in my presence, and probable cause found

March 18, 2015

Date

B. Janice Ellington U.S. Magistrate Judge

Name and Title of Judicial Officer

at

Corpus Christi, Texas

City and State

Signature of Judicial Officer

AFFIDAVIT

On March 16, 2015, at approximately 2200 hours, United States Border Patrol Agents arrested John Wesley LAWSON and seventeen (17) illegal aliens in Brooks County, within the Southern District of Texas. The arrests were subsequent to the discovery by Border Patrol Agents that LAWSON was engaged in knowingly aiding, abetting, transporting, and/or harboring of alien persons who had come to be in the United States illegally.

At approximately 2200 hours, Border Patrol Agent Shad Schutte observed a 1998 GMC tractor/trailer rig bearing Texas license plate 1E49706 (herein referred to as the Load Vehicle) enter the primary inspection lane of the United States Border Patrol Checkpoint south of Falfurrias, Texas. BPA Schutte initiated an immigration inspection of LAWSON; simultaneously, BPA Juan Ramirez directed his service issued canine unit "Besy" to conduct a free air sniff of the Load Vehicle. BPA Ramirez's canine unit alerted to the alerted to the trailer of the Load Vehicle. LAWSON and the vehicle he was operating were referred to secondary inspection.

During secondary inspection, BPA Marc Weston asked LAWSON for the key to the padlock securing the trailer doors; LAWSON provided BPA Weston with the key to the Load Vehicle, the key was not for the padlock on the trailer doors. BPA Ramirez was able to see what he suspected to be illegal aliens hiding in the trailer of the Load Vehicle through a ventilation hatch in the right rear door of the trailer. BPA Weston asked LAWSON for the key to the padlock securing the trailer doors, LAWSON advised BPA Weston the key was located on the floor of the tractor rig. BPAs removed the lock from the door, and noted that the door could not be opened from the inside. BPAs conducted field interviews of the persons hiding inside the trailer of the Load Vehicle. Subsequent to the field interviews, BPAs discovered that each of the seventeen (17) persons hiding in the trailer were citizens of countries other than the United States who had entered and come to be in United States without having been inspected or admitted. Specifically BPAs discovered fourteen (14) citizens of Mexico and three (3) citizens of El Salvador of which Laura Elena GUTIERREZ-Zuniga, Ivan SANCHEZ-Sanchez, and Maria Del Carmen GONZALEZ-Gonzalez were among.

STATEMENT of John Wesley LAWSON:

During interviews, subsequent to the advisement of his constitutional rights, LAWSON made the substantially the following statements (paraphrased):

LAWSON advised that he had been approached by and was attempting to smuggle illegal aliens through the United States Border Patrol Checkpoint at the employ of a man whom he only knew as "LD". LAWSON stated "LD" had contacted him on March 15, 2015 and asked if he [LAWSON] would be willing to drive a tractor/trailer rig from Mission, Texas to Corpus Christi, Texas for \$400.00 dollars. LAWSON admitted that "LD" had later offered to pay LAWSON \$2,500.00 for transporting the illegal aliens through the Checkpoint. LAWSON admitted that he had made multiple stops in the Load Vehicle and picked up illegal aliens at each location. LAWSON also stated that "LD" had contacted him by cellular phone about a half hour before LAWSON reached the checkpoint and advised LAWSON that a "scout vehicle" had just passed through and LAWSON shouldn't have any trouble. BPAs showed LAWSON a photograph of a silver Chevrolet Cruze which had passed through the checkpoint about a half hour before LAWSON; LAWSON confirmed that the vehicle was being operated by the man he knew as "LD".

STATEMENT of MATERIAL WITNESS Ivan SANCHEZ-Sanchez:

SANCHEZ admitted he is a citizen of Mexico who had entered the United States illegally by crossing the Rio Grande River. SANCHEZ advised that he could not identify the driver of the Load Vehicle, other than to say he recognized the individual to be a black male. SANCHEZ stated he and five other persons were the first to be loaded into the tractor/trailer rig; he remembered the Load Vehicle making two other stops, people were loaded into the trailer at each stop.

STATEMENT of MATERIAL WITNESS Laura Elena GUTIERREZ-Zuniga:

During interviews, subsequent to the advisement of her constitutional rights, GUTIERREZ-Zuniga made the substantially the following statements (paraphrased):

GUTIERREZ admitted she is a citizen of Mexico who had entered the United States illegally by crossing the Rio Grande River. GUTIERREZ advised she could not identify the driver of the Load Vehicle. She stated she was picked up by the Load Vehicle around 1900 hours, she further advised that when she entered the trailer there were already approximately five persons inside it.

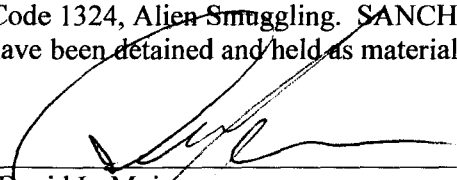
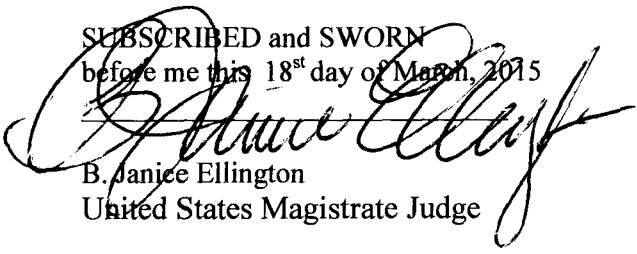
STATEMENT of MATERIAL WITNESS Maria Del Carmen GONZALEZ-Gonzalez:

During interviews, subsequent to the advisement of her constitutional rights, GONZALEZ made the substantially the following statements (paraphrased):

GONZALEZ admitted she is a citizen of Mexico who had entered the United States illegally by crossing the Rio Grande River. GONZALEZ advised she could not identify the driver of the Load Vehicle, but had seen the hand of a black male closing the trailer door after she entered. She further advised that when she entered the trailer there were already a lot of people inside of it. GONZALEZ stated after she entered the trailer, the Load Vehicle traveled until it was stopped at the USBP Checkpoint.

DISPOSITION:

HSI Corpus Christi Special Agent David Muir was notified of the facts of the case. These facts were presented to the United States Attorney's Office and AUSA Ken Cusack accepted prosecution of LAWSON for violation of Title 8 United States Code 1324, Alien Smuggling. SANCHEZ-Sanchez, GUTIRREZ-Zuniga, and GNZALEZ-Gonzalez have been detained and held as material witnesses.


David L. Muir
Special Agent
Homeland Security Investigations
SUBSCRIBED and SWORN
before me this 18st day of March, 2015

B. Janice Ellington
United States Magistrate Judge